

DRIP POINTS



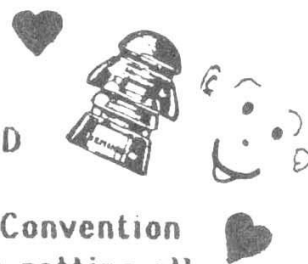
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 14 NUMBER 4 SUMMER 1987



'87 NATIONAL UPDATE!

SPECIAL MATING SERVICE PROPOSED



In trying to make this year's NIA National Convention something special and different I thought about getting all collectors together for a mating exercise. To explain: How many of you have a box or two full of mismatched or unmated transposition halves ??? I know I do, but having mismatched halves are about as useful as flat tires. So, let's all bring all of our odd transposition halves, both porcelain and glass, and get together at the Fresno National to try to match them up. This could also include unmatched Cochrane bell pieces, Muncie & Coolie halves, etc., etc. We could then put out signs on our tables saying: "Mates Wanted" and see what happens !!! Take advantage of this unique opportunity to make something out of something less and make some lonely insulators happy at the same time!

Also, the deadline for banquet reservations and exhibit table space is July 1st which is only a few weeks away. Don't be left out, reserve now.

And finally, this is the time of year for membership renewals. If you haven't renewed yet please send your dues to Rod Krupka, NIA Treasurer. Don't forget that with your renewal you will receive a coupon worth \$2.00 toward your next Crown Jewels renewal. Thanks for your continued support of the NIA.

NIA Information Director

"MESSAGES"

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Fellow NIA Members,

It has become apparent that the hobby of insulator collecting is in a boom stage. Attendance at shows and the number of shows themselves is impressive; still, very little has occurred educationally for the hobby over the last several years, with the exception of research on foreign insulators.

What is missing is visual presentations: slide programs and videotapes. There are many groups of collectors, not just of insulators, but of bottles and other small antiques, who would enjoy a presentation on insulators. Slide or videotape programs can alleviate the problem of lugging four dozen insulators to an antique guild meeting for a presentation on insulators. With more emphasis on the whys and wherefores of insulator history, with accents in the program provided by some interesting individual insulators, more people might become interested in our hobby—OR FIND A RARITY that could highlight an existing collection!

The possibilities for for program topics are endless, but some obvious choices are: History of Electrical Insulators in America (general program), insulators of Brookfield, Hemingray, E.C.&M., New England (Boston, Oakman, American, Standard, etc.), Denver, foreign countries, and Porcelain, as well as lightning rod equipment, telegraph/telephone collectibles, etc., etc.

If you have some photographic or videographic skills, then you are a definite candidate to help in this project's undertaking. What I am proposing is a library of educational programs, to be rented to local clubs and other groups at a nominal charge. This service fits in very well with the NIA's aims and I plan on working on some possible programs myself. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER YOUR ABILITIES IN THIS KIND OF A PROJECT, please write me with the particulars. This could be a big boost for the hobby!

In just a few weeks, the Central Regional Show will be held in Pearland, Texas (near Houston.) I plan on attending and I know

there will be a good turnout from the Southeastern collectors, as well as some from the farther reaches. June 27 & 28 are the show dates—if you're in the neighborhood, drop in and see us!

This will also be the last issue of Drip Points before the National Show, as well, and I don't have to tell you that this is the NIA's event of the year! Mike Guthrie is putting the finishing touches on preparations for a super show. It always seems like some dealers keep a few extra goodies just for a National, so if you're looking for something special to add to your collection, FRESNO WILL BE THE PLACE! If you are going to California, please keep in mind the NIA's annual membership meeting, which will be held on Friday, July 24; preliminary time is for a 6:30 PM meeting.

Finally, I'd like to thank the many members who have been continually supporting the NIA with their membership renewals. We still depend very heavily on your dues for our organization's funding, and you have not let us down this spring! The enthusiasm in the hobby is getting contagious, please continue to spread the NIA's good word! You may have noticed that you did not receive a new decal with your membership renewal. This is only a temporary delay while decals with the new NIA logo are being prepared. Extra decals are available at the nominal cost of \$1.00 each by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to me.

See you in Pearland and Fresno!!!

Good Collecting!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Lawless". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Kevin Lawless, NIA President

FROM THE EAST REGION VICE-PRESIDENT:

Dear Fellow Collectors,

I have recently heard that England has a very popular hobby...collecting sardines. Aren't you glad we are all somewhat normal and collect insulators? Well, I saw a great number of fellow normal people at the Marlborough, Ct. show the end of March. Show hosts Bob Lanpher and John deSousa really cured my cabin fever this spring and it was nice to see so many collectors who felt the same way. I'm going to continue to beat this dead horse and urge all insulator collectors to try to attend at least one show this year. There are several in the Northeast between now and the end of September. The show hosts deserve all of the credit no matter if it's a small backyard get-together or a larger two day show. This summer will be my first attendance at Perkiomenville. I have heard for years that it's a small but super nice gathering. Obviously, if more people go it won't be called small anymore. Hope to see you all this year. Unfortunately, due to personal reasons I will not be able to attend the Fresno National. I pass my best wishes to Michael and Becky for a super time. I'll miss you.

You all remember the March issue of "Crown Jewels" showed a neat little postcard on the cover. In case anyone is interested, you can write c/o Tim McKittrick, address listed, for information. The clear glass insulators in the photo were found in a dirt pile on the side of the road somewhere in Alaska. As Tim says "one man's trash is another man's postcard." As of this writing, they had a good supply on hand. I feel this to be a nice go-with for the hobby.

Also some great go-withs are the NIA pins and patches being made available. Support your hobby and wear them proudly.

Another easy way that collectors can promote the hobby is to simply donate unwanted insulators. I plan on doing this in the near future with two local restaurants that have very eclectic decors of old signs, bottles, auto parts, lanterns, traffic lights, ship paraphernalia, etc. But no insulators. Rather than discard the common glass and porcelain, pass it on. Who knows, it may spark a new collector out there. And isn't it better that people collect insulators rather than sardines?

Hope everyone has a great 1987 of collecting.

Red McCurty

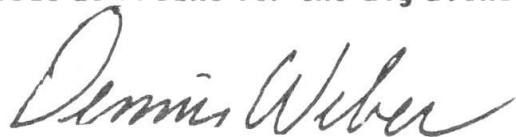
FROM THE CENTRAL REGION VICE-PRESIDENT:

There are several good insulator shows in the Central Region this year. I'm sorry to say that I have been able to make it to only one of these shows so far--the 8th Annual Omaha Show and Sale. The show, as always, was hosted by Paul and Carol Ickes and, as usual, I'm glad I made it to this one. We owe a big thanks to Paul and Carol for making this show a continuing success.

By the time you read this letter I will probably be packed and ready to leave for St. Charles, Ill. for the "Collector's Jubilee", June 5-6. I never miss this show. It is one of the 2 big shows in June this year in the Central Region. The other, of course, is the NIA Central Regional. Marilyn Albers promises this to be a fine show and from my vantage point, it appears that it will undoubtedly be a success.

The new Commemorative insulator for the 18th NIA Convention in Fresno was available at Omaha in March, and I'm sure at a couple of other shows by now. It should also be available at other shows in the near future, at St. Charles and Pearland this month for sure.

We hope to see you at one of these shows--if not, then how about at Fresno for the Big Event!



FROM THE SECOND PAST PRESIDENT:

While a lot of us were sentimentally attached to the old NIA logo, the new one is here! It is most attractive, certainly very striking, and I for one will be proud to wear it. We've been told that the new cloth patches and pins will be available in time for our NIA Central Regional Show in Pearland, Texas on June 27-28. It took a lot of time and effort on the part of some dedicated people to accomplish this, and they are to be congratulated!

But now, don't throw away those patches that still wear the old faces. You guessed it! They are now collector's items! Can't you just see some fellow at a sales table in the year 2007, thrilled to death to find one of these old goodies, all faded and limp maybe, but still a real bargain at \$50.00? You just never know!

The Antique and Collectibles Show held in Port Arthur, Texas on March 28-29 was a rousing success! This was sponsored by the Southeast Texas Collectors Club as their very first effort at putting on a show, and I hear that before they closed the doors on Sunday, they vowed to do it again next year. Walk-in traffic was heavy, due largely to the fact that the show was so well advertised, but it also proves what we've all been hearing—that the collecting urge is thriving and growing stronger all the time. It is certainly happening here in Texas!



Marilyn Albers



FROM THE TREASURER:

As spring breaks-out up here in the northern climate and the daffodils show their yellow flowers, the NIA's balance sheet is looking green, as opposed to the black that was threatening to turn red. Membership renewals have come in like a flood and, though our membership chairman won't admit to it, he loves it.

I'd like to thank our members for being so prompt in renewing this year, not only does it get the process over early for both you and the membership chairman, but it also allows the NIA to plan its fiscal year better. You have my thanks, too, for the nice notes that are frequently attached to your renewals. My apologies for not answering all of them. Processing over 125 per month does not seem to allow for a lot of personal response.

You have no doubt noticed that your new membership cards are being sent by Mike Bruner, our Membership Committee Chairman. The NIA is a growing organization and we've chosen to be more efficient and spread out the work. I take the money, Mikey sends the cards.

More thanks to our Canadian members who thoughtfully are sending their dues in US dollars. It's probably a pain for you both in effort and in your wallet, but it surely helps me and the NIA. Our bank really socks it to us when we get a check in Canadian. Between the exchange rate and a "processing fee", we might as well have given the membership for free.

Since you've been thinking about renewing your membership (and probably already have) give some thought to making a gift of a membership. We all know of insulator collectors outside of our organization, let's invite them to participate and join us by making it easy.

Lastly, if you have any suggestions as to how to make our organization more responsive to your needs, please don't hesitate to write or approach any of the officers. We are concerned and are trying to get you the best return for your membership buck.



FROM THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN:

WEST REGION VICE-PRESIDENT CANDIDATES INTRODUCED

Included in this issue of Drip Points are the letters of introduction from each of the 3 candidates running for Western Region Vice-President. Those NIA members residing in the Western Regions of the U.S. and Canada will receive their ballots in a separate mailing around June 1st. Please take the time to read the candidates' introductions and vote. Ballots should be returned to me by July 15th. The winner will be announced at the General Membership Meeting of the Fresno National.



EILEEN BANNISTER

Hello! My name is Eileen Bannister. I am 25 years old and live in Woodland, California. I am one of the candidates for the position of Western Region Vice-President.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of collectors in both Southern and Northern California, I was introduced to the hobby and found I had a strong desire to share this new found interest with others. Needless to say, many people do not understand my enthusiasm and will express, "You collect what?!?" But almost all insulator collectors empathize with this type of reaction.

Along with collecting the beautiful "jewels of the wire", we also find many people in the hobby that become very dear to us, life long friends as well. As a fairly new collector I would like to do as much as I can to support our hobby and help others to appreciate the beauty and the history of insulators. I would like the opportunity to use my energy and enthusiasm in any way to promote the hobby. Thank you for considering me a candidate for Western Region Vice-president.



SHIRLEY PATOCKA

I, Shirley Patocka, would like to be your next Western Region Vice-president.

Insulators have been a part of my life for many years. I am a charter member of the N.I.A., Nor-Cal Insulator Club, '49er Historical Bottles Association and the Western Telegraph Research Association. I have met many of you at shows over the years. I served as your N.I.A. Treasurer 1980-1982.

The insulator hobby is alive and well nationwide, and as always, the West's collectors, old and new, are growing with the hobby. As your representative, I will let the rest of the insulator world know about our enthusiasm, and foster still more participation in the hobby.

Each one of us in the Western Region must take the initiative to further insulator collecting. Please vote for me, and we can do it together.



GRANT SALZMAN

I am Grant Salzman of West Sacramento, Calif. and I would appreciate your vote for me for Western Region Vice-president of the National Insulator Association.

I am very active in our hobby as a collector, dealer and exhibit judge, and I have served on the NIA Board of Directors for 5 years, two years as Executive Director and three more years as Western Region Vice-president.

My campaign is based on two major issues:

First, it is very important that the West be represented at all of the National shows where there are at least three important meetings to attend. Unfortunately, many of our western members cannot or do not attend National shows when they are held in the Central or Eastern Regions. However, I do attend these other Nationals, and I would pledge to you that I would attend all the Nationals during my term, to give all of you the representation you deserve. (The last three Eastern Nationals have all been held in New York and I think that I am the only Westerner who has attended all three.)

Second, I strongly support the program of honoring those in our hobby who have made outstanding contributions over the years. One such honor is the award of lifetime membership in the NIA. In the past I have been in the forefront in this activity, which resulted in this honor being given to such outstanding western members as Don & Dora Harned, Dee Willett, Evelyn Milholland and Gerald & Esta Brown.

For some reason this program has sort of dried up in the last few years and it needs to be revitalized because we have others who have made outstanding contributions and who should be recognized with lifetime membership or some other appropriate honor. Pat and Shirley Patocka are good examples of this. They could not be awarded lifetime membership in past years because one or both were on the Board of Directors. But now that neither one is on the Board, they should be nominated for that award, and if I am elected I promise to do just that and to work toward the recognition so richly deserved by them and others in the NIA.

Thank you for your consideration. I would appreciate your support for my re-election to the NIA Board of Directors and to Western Vice-president.



"DISCOVERIES"

FANTASTIC FINDS

by Morgan Davis

Well folks, here's my contribution to "Discoveries." I entered the hobby a little late for the days of picking gems from open wire lines (although Vikki has stood on my shoulders to pick a few 143's from those tempting, very low Canadian Pacific crossarms!) I've been lucky enough to make a few fantastic finds in other ways. I firmly believe that the real future of the hobby is in the ground. It's a safe guess that thousands of great insulators are sleeping under dirt, leaves, and dumps waiting to be uncovered. To me, the greatest thrill in the hobby is to dig up a whole threadless. In three seasons of "pokin" I have found only one but more on that story later....

Flea markets and auctions have occasionally turned up real nice finds. My first bargain came while looking through a box of ponies at \$1.00 each when I came across a CD 105, base embossed with lines over the dome! My most thrilling auction experience came a few months later. I was attending an auction in January. There were no insulators in that auction, so I wandered over to the bulletin board in the auction hall. Listed in an upcoming auction was a "threadless insulator." Unfortunately, I would be working in a town 100 miles away at the time of the auction, so I called the auctioneer to see if I could examine the piece and bid over the phone for it. I went to his house and he showed me an unfamiliar looking insulator. I knew it was an old threadless, and I suspected it was not Canadian. He told me he found it in a junk store in Lockport, New York. He obliged my request for a phone bid.

Well, back home I went to consult Milholland's reference. It looked kinda like a couple of CD's, but not quite. I woke up on auction day, a Saturday in February, and looked out the window. A full-blown Canadian blizzard was howling outside! Lady Luck was with me and I was just grinnin'! Not too many folks will brave this kind of weather for an auction. We had arranged that I call at noon. The bidding started at \$7.00. I raised it to \$9.00. Up it went, two dollars at a time until the bidding slowed around \$20.00. Well, I was the successful bidder at \$24.00...and what was that insulator? A small style 736 hat-save for a shallow base flake and a few dome dings, it was in great condition!

But the most satisfying discovery by far was the threadless I found. My initial inspiration to dig came from Ray Klingensmith's article in Crown Jewels, but the folks who gave me lots of helpful information on a local basis were the friendly Banks brothers of Burford, Ontario. They took me out to the lines on several occasions to show me the tools and techniques that have worked for them. On my first solo trip, working the London and Port Stanley line, I found half of a light green 726. I got somewhat cocky and thought it was easier than I had expected! Well, I found nothing but lots of pieces over the next three years.

Last summer I was working in Halifax, Nova Scotia, a province which contains some of Canada's earliest rail lines. However, the geography of Nova Scotia is very different from my home province; that is to say it's much rockier than southern Ontario's soft farmland. So for two days I walked lines over shale and boulders—places where insulators would have little chance of surviving when tossed off a pole. Not a fragment could be found. On my third day, I chanced across a dump in a swampy old bog. The water was oily and about a foot deep, the place was littered with tires, wrecked cars, refrigerators—in short, not a scenic spot. But it was soft ground. So, on went the waders. I hit glass with my fork right away and began pulling out Dominion 42's from the ooze and slime. At that point, any glass felt good. It was late August and the weather was hot. As the hours wore on my careful prodding evolved to a more frenzied stabbing when "ting", I hit glass again. My fork was about eight inches under mud, and that was under a foot of water. Carefully I felt around with my poker until I "hooked" my find. Well up came a crude 718. I sloshed it in the water to get the coat of mud off and held it up to the sunlight. A deep grey color surprised me. Although it had a fresh looking dome ding (probably from my fork) I whooped and hollered. This was what I was after— I had found the "needle in the haystack." So, to all you collectors, keep on searching—there's good glass out there!!

(Editor's note: Thanks, Morgan for your time and contribution to "Discoveries". For those of you out there with similar experiences, please write them down and share them with the rest of us...Thanks!)

1987 NATIONAL & REGIONAL SHOWS

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING 1987 DATES FOR
NIA SANCTIONED REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SHOWS

June 27-28, 1987 Central Regional

in Pearland, Texas. Show hosts are Marilyn
& Bill Albers of the Lone Star Insulator
Club and Lee & Dee Garner of the Gulf
Coast Bottle Club.

July 24-26, 1987-NATIONAL in Fresno,

California hosted by Mike & Becky Guthrie of
the NorCal Insulator Club.

Sept. 26-27, 1987 Eastern Regional in

Kulpsville, Pennsylvania. Show hosts are
Claude Wambold and Steve Bobb.

1986-1987 NIA Board of Directors

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Marilyn Albers, NIA #541 (Second Past President) 14715 Oak Bend Dr., Houston, TX 77079	713-497-4146